

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 16-18 are added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative at the personal interview conducted November 17, 2003 and during the telephone interview conducted November 25, 2003. The substance of the interviews is incorporated into the following remarks and constitutes Applicants' record of the interviews.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,441,828 to Oba et al. (hereinafter "Oba"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As argued during the personal interview, Applicants submit that Oba does not disclose or suggest "controlling a ratio of the resistance component of the optical switching element at least depending on the applied voltage direction." The Office Action asserts that this feature is disclosed in Fig. 15 and column 11, lines 1-19 of Oba. However, Fig. 15 discloses a brightness controller 69, comprising a variable resistor connected to an optical sensor 55, wherein the resistor is connected to ground, rather than to a voltage source whose direction can change. Figure 1 of the present application discloses an optical switching element connected to a signal generating element. The polarity of the signal generated by the signal generating element can be reversed.

Furthermore, the passage cited in the Office Action as disclosing this element only discloses that display panel 52 is turned on or off depending upon the light detection output from the light sensor 55. No voltage signal generating device is disclosed in this passage, which could change the direction of the applied voltage to the variable resistor of brightness controller 69.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 8-10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Oba in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,516,607 to Iijima et al. (hereinafter "Iijima"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Iijima discloses in Figure 2B a photosensitive material 1, connected to a power source 17. However, the power source shown has only a single polarity. Therefore, Iijima does not supply the subject matter lacking in Oba of "controlling a ratio of the resistance component of the optical switching element at least depending on the applied voltage direction."

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Oba in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,700,936 to Shimizu (hereinafter "Shimizu"). However, Shimizu discloses a high voltage generating apparatus, and does not disclose an optical switching element at all. Therefore, Shimizu cannot remedy the deficiency of Oba with respect to claim 1. Claim 11 is dependent from claim 1 and therefore claim 11 is patentable over the cited references.

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 11 be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Oba in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,429,839 to Sakamoto (hereinafter "Sakamoto"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sakamoto discloses a liquid crystal display apparatus including a liquid crystal display device, a light source for illuminating the liquid crystal device, an LCD device driving circuit for providing a driving voltage to the liquid crystal display device and a plurality of liquid crystal driving signals including a display data latch signal. However, Sakamoto does not disclose an optical switching element, and therefore Sakamoto does not remedy the deficiency of Oba with respect to claim 1, in that Sakamoto does not disclose "controlling a ratio of the

resistance component of the optical switching element at least depending on the applied voltage direction."

Claims 14 and 15 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14 and 15.

In the telephone interview conducted November 25, the Examiner argued that the term "voltage direction" was vague and unclear. However, Applicants assert that the voltage direction is clearly defined, for example, in Figs. 1-5 and 7-8 and, for example, on page 8, lines 4-15 of the specification. As argued above, no such changing voltage direction is disclosed or suggested in Oba. However, in order to expedite prosecution, claims 16-18 are added, which are claims 1, 3 and 4, wherein the word "polarity" is substituted for the word "direction." As agreed to during the telephone interview, Oba does not disclose "controlling a ratio of the resistance component to the optical switching element at least depending on the applied voltage polarity."

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Amendment Transmittal Letter

Date: December 3, 2003

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